Notetaker Curriculum Outline

This curricular outline provides the reader with basic information on teaching blind students to use the various electronic braille notetaking devices now available. Because of the wide range of options of these new writing and research tools, this outline cannot cover all the available devices and applications. Therefore, the task force decided to emphasize those areas that are common to all the devices and that are critical to braille literacy.

Getting Started

Adjust Speech—volume, rate, pitch

(Touch)* Cursor

Exiting the Current Activity

Menus

(Thumb Keys)*

Word Processor

Create a Document

Select a Document

Read a Document

Listen to a Document

Top of document, Bottom of document, Whole document, Sentences,

Words, Characters, Moving to either end of a line

Insert Time and Date

Format Menu

Center a line

Right justification

Edit a Document

Insert text

Delete text

Delete menu

Quick commands

_____

*Items in parentheses apply to BrailleNote only.

Search a document

Find and replace

Spell checker

Emboss and Print

General Functions

Display Date

Display Time

(Toggle for Thumb Keys)*

Setting Keyboard Voice

Braille Display Options

Braille display on/off

Preferred reading grade

Review Voice

Speech

Punctuation level

Number format

Power status

Advanced Word Processing

Block Commands

Append block to clipboard, Copy block to clipboard, Delete block, Insert file, Move block to clipboard, Paste clipboard, Read block, Store block, Top marker insertion, Bottom marker insertion, Erase file and exit keyword

File Manager

File Manager Menu

Directory, Copy file, Erase file, Rename file, Move file, Protection, Translate file, Folder manager

Folder Manager Menu

Create folder, Rename folder, Erase folder

Utilities

Set time and date

Developed by Susan Benzick, Los Angeles Unified School District

Braille Resources and Materials

I. Braille Readiness

A. Tactual Discrimination/Object Identification

1. Sensory Stimulation Kit/Tactual-Kinesthetic Component (birth to six years). **APH**

2. Patterns Prebraille Program: Instructions for Making Tactual Readiness Books, The Book of Toys, Paper Book, Button Book, Pairs Book, Width Book. **APH**

3. On the Way to Literacy: Storybooks (two to five years)—Something Special, Book About Me, Geraldine's Blanket, Giggly-Wiggly, Snickety-Snick. **APH**

4. Tactile Treasures. **APH**

B. Tactual Discrimination/Texture Identification

1. Sensory Stimulation Kit/Tactual-Kinesthetic Component. **APH**

2. Large Textured Block (five years and older). **APH**

3. Sensory Cylinder Set (three years and older). **APH**

4. Textured Matching Blocks (three years and older). **APH**

5. On the Way to Literacy: Storybooks (two to five years)—That's Not My Bear. **APH**

6. Oakmont Tactile Readiness Books. **Oakmont Visual Aids Workshop**

C. Tactual Discrimination/Awareness of Braille

1. On the Way to Literacy: Storybooks. **APH**

2. Preparatory Reading Program for Visually Handicapped Children (PREP) (three to six years). **APH**

3. Mangold Developmental Program of Tactile Perception and Braille Letter Recognition. **ETA**

D. Tactual Discrimination/Flat Shape Identification

1. Shape Board (four years and older). **APH**

2. Puzzle Form Board Kit (three years and older). **APH**

3. Formboard with Removable Hands (five years and older). **APH**

4. Geometric Forms (five years and older). **APH**

5. Chang Tactual Diagram Kit (six years and older). **APH**

Note: The key to the acronyms (resources) appears at the end of this appendix.

E. Tactual Discrimination/Molded Object and Shape Identification

   1. Tactile Treasures: Math and Language Concepts for Young Children with Visual Impairments (four years and older). **APH**

   2. On the Way to Literacy: Storybooks (three to five years)—Jennifer's Messes, Gobs of Gum, Roly-Poly Man, Jellybean Jungle, Thingamajig. **APH**

F. Tactual Discrimination/Raised Lines and Shapes Identification

   1. Touch and Tell, Volumes I and II (five years and older). **APH**

   2. Tactual Discrimination Worksheets, Parts 1–3 (five years and older). **APH**

   3. Tactile Treasures. **APH**

   4. Preparatory Reading Program for Visually Handicapped Children (PREP). **APH**

   5. On the Way to Literacy: Storybooks—The Longest Noodle, That Terrible, Awful Day, The Caterpillar, Silly Squiggles, Bumpy Rolls Away, The Blue Balloon, The Gumdrop Tree. **APH**

   6. Patterns Prebraille Program: Form Books. **APH**

   7. Oakmont Tactile Readiness Books. **Oakmont Visual Aids Workshop**

G. Tactually Discriminates/Identifies Cutouts of Objects

   1. Patterns Prebraille Program: Instructions for Making Tactual Readiness Books—Playground Book, Pet Book, Zoo Book, Book of Things, The Book of Things That Go. **APH**

   2. Tactile Treasures. **APH**

H. Discrimination of Braille Shapes

   1. Classroom Calendar Kit (four to ten years). **APH**

   2. Touches and Tell, Volume III. **APH**

   3. Tactual Discrimination Worksheets, Part 4. **APH**

   4. Mangold Developmental Program of Tactile Perception. **ETA**

II. Braille Readiness

A. Identification of Braille Units

   1. Mangold Developmental Program of Tactile Perception. **ETA**

   2. Expanded Dolch Word Cards (six years and older). **APH**

   3. Grade 2 Braille Cards (five years and older). **APH**

   4. Individual Calendar Kit (four to ten years). **APH**

   5. Patterns: The Primary Braille Reading Program. **APH**

B. Development of Reading Skills and Speed

   1. Patterns: The Primary Braille Reading Program. **APH**

   2. Patterns Library Series. **APH**

   3. Braille Too, An Instructional Braille Reading and Writing Program for Secondary Students. **Grant Wood Area Education Agency**

   4. Braille Code Recognition (BCR) Materials (ten years and older). **APH**

   5. ABC's of Braille. **APH**

   6. Braille FUNdamentals. **TSBVI**

III. Braille Writing

A. Braillewriter

   1. Patterns: The Primary Braille Spelling and English Program. **APH**

   2. Swing Cell. **APH**

   3. Swing Cell Compact. **APH**

   4. Braillewriting Dot by Dot. **APH**

B. Braille Notetaker

   1. Braille Lite Teaching Curriculum. **FS**

   2. Braille Note & Braille Lite Curricula. **CSB**

C. Slate and Stylus

   1. Teaching the Braille Slate and Stylus. **ETA**

   2. Braille Writing Dot by Dot. **APH**

   3. Peg Slate. **APH**

   4. Big Cell. **APH**

IV. Braille Reading and Writing for Print Readers and Former Print Readers

A. Handbook for Learning to Read Braille By Sight. **APH**

B. The Braille Connection (teen–adult). **APH**

C. Just Enough to Know Better: A Braille Primer for Parents. **NBP**

V. Support and Teacher Material

A. Manuals and Code Books

   1. Braille Transcription, A Manual for Teachers. **CSMT**

   2. Programmed Instruction in Braille. **SCALARS Publishing**

   3. Instruction Manual for Braille Transcribing, 2000. **APH**

   4. Braille Formats: Principles of Print to Braille Transcription. **APH**

5. Alphabetical Index of Braille Signs. **APH**

6. (Pocket) Chart of Braille Characters and Contractions (in braille only). **APH**

7. Burns Braille Transcription Dictionary. **AFB Press**

8. Literary Braille Practice Sentences. **ETA**

9. Guidelines and Games for Teaching Efficient Braille Reading. **AFB Press**

10. Braille Specifications for Print Materials Adopted by the California State Board of Education. **CSMT**

B. Manuals and Code Books: Math and Science

1. Introduction to Braille Math. **APH**

2. Learning the Nemeth Braille Code: A Manual for Teachers and Students. **APH**

3. The Nemeth Braille Code for Mathematics and Science Notation. **APH**

4. Provisional Braille Code for Computer Notation. **APH**

5. Nemeth Code Reference Sheet. **APH**

6. Nemeth Reference Sheets. **NBP**

7. Computer Braille Code. **APH**

C. Manuals and Code Books: Music

1. Braille Music Chart. **APH**

2. Introduction to Braille Music Transcription. **APH**

3. MusicBraille Code, 1997. **APH**

Resources

AFB Press. American Foundation for the Blind, 11 Penn Plaza, Suite 300, New York, NY 10001; (800) 232-3044: FAX (412) 741-0609; http://www.afb.org

APH. American Printing House for the Blind, P.O. Box 6084, 1839 Frankfort Ave., Louisville, KY 40206-0085; (800) 223-1839; http://www.aph.org

CCB. California Council of the Blind, 578 B St., Hayward, CA 94541; (510) 537-7877; FAX (510) 537-7830; http://www.ccbnet.org

CSB. California School for the Blind, 500 Walnut Ave., Fremont, CA 94536; (510) 794-3800; http://www.csb-cde.ca.gov

CSMT. Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Technology, 1430 N St., Sacramento, CA 95814; (916) 445-5103; FAX (916) 323-9732; http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/sm

CTEVH. California Transcribers and Educators of the Visually Handicapped, 714 N. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90039; (323) 666-2211; http://www.ctevh.org

ETA. Exceptional Teaching Aids, 20102 Woodbine Ave., Castro Valley, CA 94546; (800) 549-6999; (510) 582-4859; FAX (510) 582-5911.

FS. Freedom Scientific, 11800 31st Court North, St. Petersburg, FL 33716-1805; (800) 444-4443; FAX (727) 803-8001; http://www.freedomscientific.com

Grant Wood Area Education Agency, Marketing Dept., 4401 Sixth St. SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404; (800) 332-8488; (319) 399-6714; FAX (319) 399-6457; http://www.aea10.k12.ia.us

Oakmont Visual Aids Workshop, 310 White Oak Dr., Santa Rosa, CA 95409; (707) 539-8030

Tack-Tiles, LLC Ltd., P.O. Box 475, Plaistow, NH 03865; (800) 822-5845; http://www.tack-tiles.com; e-mail: braille@tack-tiles.com

NBP. National Braille Press, 88 St. Stephen St., Boston, MA 02115; (800) 548-7323; http://www.nbp.org

NFBC. National Federation of the Blind of California, 175 E. Olive Ave., Burbank, CA 91502; (818) 558-6524; e-mail: nfbcal@sbcglobal.net

SCALARS Publishing, P.O. Box 382834, Germantown, TN 38183-2834; (901) 737-0001

TSBVI. Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, 1100 West 45th St., Austin, TX 78756; http://www.tsbvi.edu

Glossary

APH—American Printing House for the Blind. APH is the major supplier of educational materials for visually impaired children.

Assistive technology—Any item, piece of equipment, or system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

Blindness—The inability to see; absence or severe reduction of vision. See also *functionally blind* and *legally blind.*

Braille—A tactile code system, consisting of raised dots organized in cells, used by persons who are blind for reading and writing. Each braille cell consists of up to six dots, which are arranged in different patterns to represent letters, numbers, symbols, and words.

Braille notetakers—A small electronic talking device that is configured like a braillewriter but uses a series of commands to produce braille. This device can be used with a standard computer to print out assignments in print or in braille.

Braillewriter—A machine used to produce embossed braille symbols.

Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Technology (CSMT)—A unit of the California Department of Education. The CSMT administers the American Printing House federal quota program as well as reader services for blind teachers, and it provides instructional resources in special formats for students who are blind.

Compensatory skills—Any technique, habit, or activity—such as daily living, social, and emotional skills—that must be developed to overcome a severe visual impairment.

Contracted braille—Sometimes referred to as grade two braille. Contractions are signs that represent whole words, parts of words, or letter combinations. There are 189 contractions in the braille code.

Federal quota program—A federal program administered by the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) and its ex officio trustee in each state that provides adapted educational materials and equipment to eligible students who meet the definition of blindness.

Functionally blind—A student whose primary channels for learning are tactual and auditory.

Individualized education program (IEP)—A written plan for a special education student that is developed and implemented in accordance with the IEP team and that is designed to meet the assessed needs of the student. Federal law includes specific requirements related to literacy for blind students.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)—The IDEA ensures a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment for all students and youths with disabilities.

Legally blind—Central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye after best correction with conventional spectacle lenses or visual acuity better than 20/200 if there is a field defect in which the widest diameter of the visual field is no greater than 20 degrees. In the United States this definition has been established primarily for economic and legal purposes.

Learning Media Assessment (LMA)—A comprehensive assessment to determine a student's reading and writing medium—print, braille, auditory, or a combination of modes.

Literacy—The ability to read and to write with proficiency.

Nemeth code—A braille code for mathematics and scientific notation.

Other braille codes—In addition to the Nemeth code, there is the literary braille code made up of rules for the use of contracted and uncontracted braille, a computer braille code, a foreign language code, and a music code.

Quota funds—Funds earmarked by federal legislation for students who are registered by the American Printing House for the Blind. Each state receives specialized funds for books and materials for the blind. In California quota funds are managed by CSMT.

SELPA—Special education local plan area. A consortium of school districts that provide services for students with disabilities.

Slate and stylus—A note-taking device. The slate is a flat implement made out of metal or plastic that has rows of braille cells on it; braille is produced by pushing the stylus through the holes in the slate to make braille dots.

Textbook format—Specialized braille rules that specify how pages, tables, graphs, and pictures in texts will be organized.

Uncontracted braille—The braille symbols that represent the alphabet; sometimes referred to as grade one braille.

UEBC—Unified English Braille Code.

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